

VZCZCXRO1060

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DE RUEHSM #0654/01 2881515
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4799
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 STOCKHOLM 000654

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/15/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV IR AF CE ZL ZF EUN SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH PREVIEW OF OCTOBER GAERC

Classified By: PolCouns Marc Koehler for reasons 1.4 (B) & (D).

¶1. (SBU) Deputy EU Correspondent Jonas Wendel told poloff on October 16 that the October 26-7 GAERC will be done according to the "Bildt Format," which begins with a dinner on the 26th, and a full day of discussions on the 27th. The dinner topics are:

--Iran non-proliferation issues, and maybe political and human rights issues;

--Moldovan liberalization and Albania accession (which would have been a Council Opinion had the Germans not interfered);

The daytime B points are:

--On Afghanistan, the Council Secretariat will present its report on what more the EU can and should be doing; on Pakistan, the EU will discuss future configurations of the EU-Pakistan Summit;

--Middle East Process: discussion on the EU can assist the U.S. efforts;

--FM Bildt will report on his two trips to Bosnia and discussion will continue on how and when to close OHR;

--Conclusions will be adopted criticizing Sri Lanka for its internally displaced persons camp;

--Conclusions will also be adopted ending sanctions on Uzbekistan.

Expecting that a High Rep for Foreign Affairs will soon be named as provided under the Lisbon Treaty, the Swedes are feeling "pressured" to "stay out" of certain areas, especially Iran. End Summary.

Lisbon Treaty

¶2. (SBU) The Swedes are preparing to implement the Lisbon Treaty on January 1, but they find themselves in limbo, needing to take action on foreign policy issues but "restrained" from doing so due to the lack of a High Representative for Foreign Affairs. Sweden feels "pressured to stay out of areas that will eventually be led by the Hi Rep. Wendel said this dilemma especially affects Iran issues.

Iran

¶3. (C) Monday's dinner will focus on non-proliferation, and maybe political and human rights issues. Two events prior to the GAERC will influence the tone of discussions: the P5 1 technical meeting with Iran scheduled for October 19 and the October 25 IAEA inspection of Qom. At Sweden's request, the Council Secretariat is working on an audit of Iran sanctions adopted thus far. Some EU Member States view this as a first step in renewing sanctions, but Wendel said FM Bildt has

stressed that it is not that at all. Rather, Bildt sees the review as a pragmatic evaluation of the effectiveness of sanctions. The Council Secretariat might not be ready to present its report by October 26, and instead report highlights. Some Member States, including Britain, have already developed their own lists of renewed sanctions, Wendel said.

¶4. (C) If Iran agrees to ship 1,200 kilograms of low enriched uranium to Russia and France, the Iranian uranium enrichment program would be rolled back one year, he stated. This would be a "major breakthrough" and a confidence-building measure. He added the caveat that the West has underestimated Iran's uranium holdings in the past.

Moldova and Albania

¶5. (SBU) Romania usually wants to discuss Moldova, but its government collapsed and it lacks an FM to push the topic. Instead, Bildt will discuss what occurred during the EU Troika's visit to Chisinau on October 16 to meet with the new government and analyze the change from communism to liberalism. Albanian accession was demoted to a dinner topic because the Germans want to wait for their newly-elected parliament to review Tirana's application. Some Member States, including Italy, are upset with the Germans for blocking the Commission's plan to issue an opinion on Albanian accession and will make such known during the dinner. The November GAERC will therefore issue the opinion that the Commission accepts Albania's application and will begin to develop a plan of action for Albania to harmonize

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with the EU acquis.

Afghanistan and Pakistan

¶6. (SBU) The EU's new Afghanistan strategy will be a B item. The strategy has been finalized by the Commission and the Council Secretariat and focuses on the EU's contributions to counter terrorism, state-building, and police training. There will be a "lengthy" discussion of how the EU should conduct relations with the eventual new government, and what to do if a second round of elections occurs. On Pakistan, a "political signal" will be made with the decision of whether or not to continue holding the annual EU-Pakistan Summit at the ministerial level, or switch to the "ad hoc" level.

Middle East Peace Process

¶7. (SBU) The discussion on the peace process will focus on how the EU can assist the U.S. There will be no conclusions.

Western Balkans

¶8. (SBU) FM Bildt will brief on his October 9 and 20 trips to Bosnia. Discussion will focus on: how and when the EU should dismantle the Office of the High Representative (OHR); the role of third countries (including Turkey and the U.S.) after OHR closure; and the gradual outphasing of the EUFOR Althea Mission. Wendel said the Althea discussion will be "tricky" as the discussion will be over "the change from an operative capability to a supportive capability." Western Balkans will also be a theme at the November "Super GAERC" with EU defense ministers. The Peace Implementation Council "hopefully" will decide on November 18/19 to phase out OHR, he said.

Sri Lanka

¶9. (SBU) The Swedes tried to remove this item yet again, but the Danes and Brits were "furious" so it is on as a B item.

Conclusions will be adopted criticizing the Sri Lankan government for its internally displaced persons camp in the north. Most of the IDPs are civilians and the EU will appeal to the Government to address the allegations of human rights abuses, perhaps calling for an independent, international inquiry.

Great Lakes and Sahel Regions

¶10. (SBU) The annual conclusions on the Great Lakes Region will be given, focusing on Eastern Congo. Wendel said it will simply be "an update on a bad situation." Conclusions on the Sahel Region will also be given, discussing the rising threat from terrorism and organized crime.

Uzbekistan Sanctions

¶11. (SBU) In a separate meeting with Central Asian Desk Officer Henrik Norberg, poloff learned that the Council conclusions on Uzbekistan will announce the expiration of sanctions, but also send a clear signal that the human rights and democracy situation continue to be problematic. The conclusions will express the EU's concerns over developments in Uzbekistan and might include plans for a formal review at a future date, or commission another report by the EU Heads of Missions in Tashkent. The Netherlands and UK might force a discussion.

¶12. (C) The Swedes know the NGO community will be upset--and rightfully so, Norberg said--but the EU lacks the political will to keep the sanctions alive. Too many Member States want the sanctions to go away because they are ineffective: the visa black list never worked and the arms embargo had no concrete effect. The benchmarks stated in the first incarnation of the sanctions remain unmet: Human Rights Watch and the UN Special Rep have yet to be allowed to conduct independent investigations of the events in Andijon. Norberg noted that the Uzbeks will likely try to use the expiration of sanctions to legitimize their stance that they did nothing wrong at Andijon.

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